

La Muse

DOCENT DATES

June 3 Service Recognition Ceremony, 4-6 pm, Ridley-Tree Center

September 7

September 14
Workshop student tours

September 21

October 5

October 19

November 2

November 16

December 7

Holiday Party TBD

2023

January 4

January 18

February 1

February 15

March 1

March 15

April 5

May 3

May 17

Graduation TBD



Florine Stettheimer (1871-1944) was an icon of Jazz Age New York. Daughter of a wealthy Jewish family in Rochester, she studied at the NYC Art Students League and then in Europe where she met Symbolist painters and poets and the Ballets Russes, and became friends with Marcel Duchamp and his circle. Back in NYC she and her sisters and mother became the center of an elite salon of the artistic vanguard. This 1917 painting, *Sunday Afternoon in the Country*, was included in New York's Jewish Museum retrospective in 2017 entitled "Florine Stettheimer: Painting Poetry."

Submitted by Ricki Morse

Dear Docents,

The museum looks very different than it did a few short days ago with the exhibition gone. Visitors are few and far between, the galleries quiet. The past three months have been both exhilarating and overwhelming in equal measure, with record breaking numbers of visitors and students. Every touring skill in our collective arsenal was put to use as we maneuvered through new territory. As a Council we can feel very proud of a job well done, delivering high quality tours while managing a tightly-packed environment, eager visitors, long lines, and last minute calls for extra Docents when groups had to be split. The experience has taken us to another level, and I sense we have added to our already-considerable range of flexibility.

As we close out the service year, we can look forward to what comes next—a year of new exhibitions, new opportuni-



Patty Santiago,
Docent Council
President

ties. Rachel has emailed the Preference Sheets. Please return yours by July 1st along with annual dues. And speaking of what comes next, the Docent Recruitment event was encouraging, with 25 participants, some already having submitted applications. We hope to repeat the event in August.

Finally, my gratitude to everyone for your patience and understanding during my tenure as president. To say these two years have been unprecedented is an understatement. From the pandemic lockdown to the smash hit exhibition, I could not have managed all the moving parts without our terrific board, and all of you who make this Council work year in and year out. It truly has been the best of times, and the worst of times. Thanks to you, my fellow docents, I will remember them in reverse order. ■

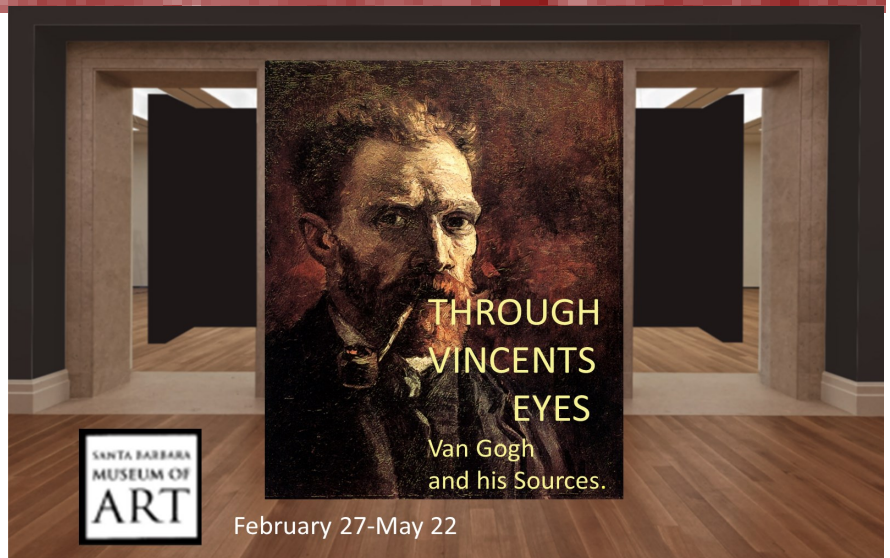
Patty

Congratulations, Docents!



On Sunday, May 22nd, we said goodbye to the last group of visitors to the *Van Gogh* exhibition. According to official counts,

Rachel Heidenry 65,656 people saw the show over its 12-week run! Adult Teams gave 69 general tours and 58 Special Request tours – that’s over 5,600 visitors!



Meanwhile, Student Teams gave tours for 30 different schools, ranging from Bakersfield to Oxnard—over 1400 students! Outside the Museum, our Community Speakers Program team presented *Van Gogh* previews to 375 attendees. These groups were then given Special Request tours.

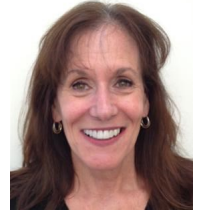
The exhibition was a triumph and we couldn’t have done it without the dedicated support from all of you in the Council. Thank you to everyone who led tours, conducted research, shared the exhibition with friends, and spread the word that the Santa Barbara Museum of Art had the hottest show in town! ■

Rachel

From our **Student Teams Co-chairs**
Teda Pilcher and Irene Stone



What an unexpected year of student touring! The fall started out with secondary schools, only to face Museum closure in January as we held our breath and waited for the pandemic to subside. When it did, our *Van Gogh* exhibition brought a full schedule of student tours, along with an unprecedented number of requests for regular student tours! Our New Active Docents rose admirably



to the challenge, handling large groups, wending their way through crowded galleries. New Docents, senior Docents—everyone worked well together. As co-chair I can say that Teda did a great job of scheduling coverage for each *Van Gogh* tour. Our thanks to all our student team leaders—Pattie Firestone, Denise Klassen, Nicola Gherson, and Gail Stichler. Also, a big thank you to Rachel for her comprehensive organization and communication with us throughout this year, and to Elena for keeping all tours on track. Student Teams, you have done a wonderful job, your commitment, enthusiasm, and collegiality coming together to meet the new challenges and make this a stellar year.

We have begun plans for next year. Please save Wednesday, Sept. 14, 1:00-4:00, in Luria Activities Center for a workshop on student touring. We will focus on such areas as VTS, along with other thinking routines, and storytelling techniques. All docents are welcome to attend. ■

Again, our sincere gratitude, *Irene and Teda*

From our **Adult Teams Co-chairs**
Laura DePaoli and Denise Klassen



The SBMA said good-bye to *Through Vincent's Eyes* on Sunday, May 22nd with a sell-out crowd. The exhibition featuring almost everyone's favorite artist was a great success, and one that Docents were very much a part of. Our mighty 14-member *Van Gogh* team put forward a stellar effort. We did 69 regularly scheduled tours. Many had over 50 visitors—3 tours had 70—and closing day brought a whopping 80+



tour! For extra large groups we called in additional Docents. We gave 82 Special Request tours, bringing the total to 5,600 museum guests toured. A truly phenomenal effort.

Our winter/spring *Highlights* Team also deserves a shout out for their flexibility in rescheduling all of their earlier tours to June. As does the *Nature and Spirituality* Team for taking the remaining Friday tours and allowing them to be moved to a new time to accommodate an additional Friday exhibition tour.

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to making this fantastic exhibition a success for the Museum and the Docent Council. Looking forward, it's almost summer and we have a wonderful contemporary show, *Going Global*, to look forward to, as well as the return of *Highlights* tours.

If you enjoyed James Glisson's talk on *Going Global* please consider joining our summer Contemporary Team. We are still looking for a few additional members. Email or call Denise if you are interested. ■

With appreciation and gratitude,
Laura and Denise

From our **Community Speakers Chair**
Shirley Waxman



The Docent Council's Community Speakers Program (CSP) began giving talks in February to coincide with the opening of our *Van Gogh* exhibition. This has been our sole topic for the 12-week run. Lori Mohr has given a dozen PowerPoint presentations — to rave reviews from all venues — with a total of 375 attendees. These talks reach people who are unable to come to the Museum, as well as other community organizations in both Santa Barbara and Ventura, encouraging them to visit the exhibition on their own or to book a private docent-led tour for their group.

Shirley Waxman
CSP Team Leader

The CSP team is dedicated to offering original, informative and engaging PowerPoint presentations, each Docent creating their own talks on art that is interesting to them and relates to the Museum's permanent collection, or focuses on an upcoming/current exhibition. If you enjoy being out in the community and creating presentations, consider joining the Community Speakers Program. It's an exciting team to be on, and so satisfying to share the power of art with community groups eager to hear our talks.

If you would like more information about CSP, or are interested in joining, please contact Shirley Waxman at 805-252-7909 or shirleywaxman@gmail.com. ■

Shirley

April and May Statistics

April

Casa Dorinda— 60

Private Art Group —18

Maravilla Independent—35

May

Vista Del Monte—31

Santa Barbara Club—24

Maravilla Assisted- 20

Total Attendees for April and May = **188**

From our **Evaluations Co-chairs**
Shirley Waxman and Paul Guido



As another Docent year closes, I would like to thank all the conscientious evaluators who worked so hard to get all of us evaluated. Our unique process keeps our tours up to the standards of our Docent Council. It is what makes our program so special, each of us maintaining motivation to give the best tours we can to our visitors. Thank you all!



Shirley and Paul

From our **Membership Chair**
Pattie Firestone



Dear Docents,

I am pleased to announce the service pin recipients for 2022. The Education Department will be hosting the Awards Ceremony on Friday June 3rd from 4:00—6:00 pm . Please join together on the lawn at Ridley-Tree House as we honor our fellow Docents for their dedication to the museum and commitment to service as an active member of our council. Be sure to RSVP to Rachel. ■

10 YEAR PINS - Barbara Boyd, Joan Dewhirst, Teda Pilcher, Mike Ramey
(introduced by Kathryn Padgett and Gretchen Simpson)

15 YEAR PINS - Ann Hamond, Lori Mohr
(Ann introduced by Gretchen Simpson, Lori by Ricki Morse)

20 YEAR PIN - Helene Strobel (introduced by Niki Brukner & Barbara Carrington)

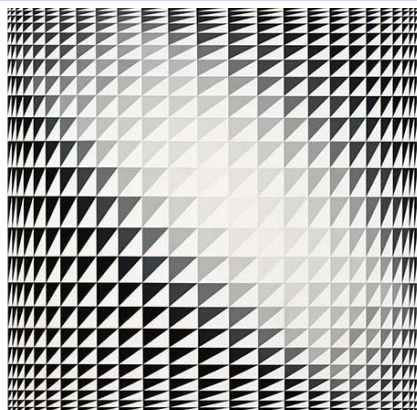
SERVICE AWARDS CEREMONY

Friday June 3rd, 4:00-6:00

Ridley Tree Education Center (RSVP to Rachel)

MEMBERSHIP NOTE: This is your last chance to report service hours for the fiscal year ending June 30! Hours are recorded all year, but anything reported after June 30 will count for next year. We've all worked hard, so take a minute to send in those hours.

Pattie.firestone@gmail.com 301-520-5775 (mobile) 805-770-7499 (home)



Bridget Riley, *Annul*, 1965.
Emulsion on board. SBMA

Going Global:
Abstract Art at Mid-Century
Opens June 21



Kenzo Okada. *Insistence*,
1956. Oil on canvas. SBMA

Docent Pilgrimage
Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art
By Josie Martin



It is a real pilgrimage to get to this Museum set deep in the woods of the Ozarks. First we had to fly to Dallas and then to Fayetteville and then drive through sparse countryside to Benton-



Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas

ville. But once on site, it was all walking distance through beautiful shaded trails to arrive at the pavilions that comprise the 50,000 square foot Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art.

“Wear good walking shoes,” advised Karen Howsam in one of her missives to the nine of us. My curiosity about Crystal Bridges had been piqued long ago when I first read of Walmart heiress Alice Walton’s mission. Then there were the photos and videos of the marvelous lacy structures spanning the Crystal Springs when it opened in 2011. But why, of all places, did she choose this far away off-the-tourist-track location in the northwest corner of Arkansas? Being there, I quickly understood the founder’s concept that “art, like music, and literature is not a recreation merely for the purview of the rich.” It must be set even in such ob-



Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828), *George Washington*, 1797, oil on canvas., 50 x 40 in.



Norman Rockwell (1894-1978), *Rosie the Riveter*, 1943, oil on canvas, 54 x 40 in.

scure places as an Ozark forest so that thousands of children can visit each year and many more tourists, some of whom may never get to New York, to Dallas, and other big artful cities.

Once inside the museum, I expected classic Americana hanging in the galleries. The fabled works of Gilbert Stuart, Thomas Cole, Thomas Eakins, Frederick Church... the Hudson River School... and perhaps a few Georgia O’Keeffes, Mary Cassatts, etc. Within minutes of our arrival, I was literally gob-

smacked by the famous portrait of George Washington right across the room from *Rosie the Riveter* with her powerful physique, sitting on a steel column holding a lunchbreak sandwich. Her face is triumphant, even saucy, one foot firmly crushing a copy of Hitler's "Mein Kampf." I had to wonder what our first President across the gallery thought of this Amazon of a woman draped in overalls, large American flag in the background.



Nari Ward, (b. 1963) *We the People, Nosotros el Pueblo*, 2015, Shoelaces, 12 ft x 27 ft

Nearby came another surprise, Nari Ward's "We The People, Nosotros El Pueblo," the jumbo wall text in both languages—three of the most important words, announcing the preamble to the Constitution—as a

huge wall sculpture, the elegant letters comprised of shoe laces, found materials. In 2015 as a community project, ordinary citizens were invited to string a few laces onto the armature. I hadn't thought of those words in years, but now the simple eloquence of those lace-letters dangling from the wires moved me. The bilingual wall text, a not-so-subtle reminder that it is *We the People*, not just white people, not just men, not just landed gentry....



Teri Greeves (Kiowa, b. 1970), *Abstraction: Kiowas by Design*, 2014, Beads on canvas high-heeled sneakers. 10 x 14 x 4 in.

The collection is rich, we pass by a Picasso. "No," says my husband, "Look, it's a Cubist Diego Rivera from his youthful

days in Paris." I'm puzzled, but Rivera is Mexican! And then I realize American Art meant *all* of the Americas, including the Americans who were here first. The wall texts repeatedly acknowledge our country's ancestral beginnings, telling the dark side of colonialism, slavery, the oppression of minorities, of women. One of my favorite works was a pair of red spiky laced up shoes embedded with Kiowa motifs by Teri Greeves, an esteemed Native American artist who had learned to do impressive bead work by the time she was an eight-year-old and selling her carefully crafted pieces to buy art materials. Moving on we come to "Animal Dances," by

Diego Rivera (Mexican, 1886-1957) *Les Sucrier et les bougies (Sugar Bowl and Candies)*, oil on canvas, 25 x 21 in.





Awa Tsireh, a parade of San Ildefonso Pueblo figures floating past, they might be figures that have leaped from the famous Ildefonso pottery. There are more Native American works than we can stop to see. We move on.

There is great tribute to the working classes: "Assembly Line," "Arc Welders," "Bootleg Coal Min-

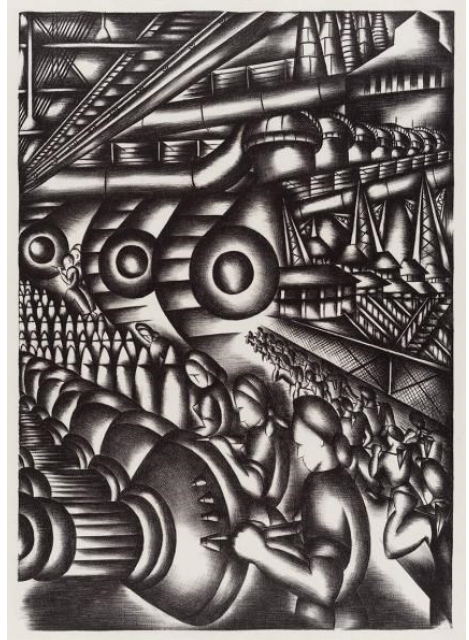
Awa Tsireh, (Alfonso Roybal) (San Ildefonso Pueblo, 1898-1955), *Animal Dance*, 1930, Gouache on paper, 26 x 38 in.

ers." At some point, I say to Ed, "This museum is so woke!" And this is



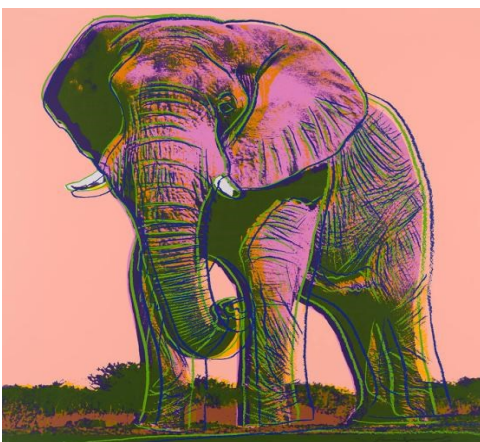
before we've come to the Helen Frankenthaler, the Joan Mitchell, or the Judy Chicago pieces. There are galleries full of works by women, most with names I unfortunately don't recognize. And there is a pink elephant by Warhol. A graffiti of Basquiat. There is the wonderful and disturbing, "Our Town," by the L.A. artist, Kerry James Marshall.

It seems everywhere there



Jolan Gross-Bettelheim (1900-1972), *Assembly Line (Home Front)*, 1942, Lithograph, 23 x 20 in.

Jean-Michel Basquait (1960-1988), *Untitled*, 1981, oil stick, acrylic, and spray enamel on canvas, 78 x 68 in.



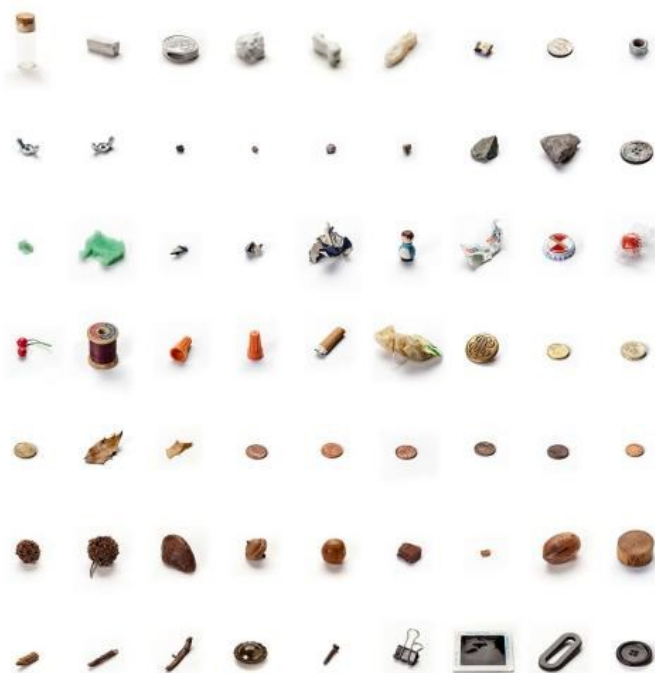
Andy Warhol, (1928-1987), *African Elephant*, from the series, *Endangered Species*." 1983, screen print on paper, 38 x 38 in.



Kerry James Marshall (b. 1955) *Our Town*, 1995, acrylic and collage on canvas, 101 x 143 in.

is art dismantling the historical and systemic invisibility of people past and present. Art critic Philip Kennicott writes about Crystal Bridges as having an “astonishing mix of work by artists—not white men—showing this museum’s consciousness and thorough effort at inclusivity.” It was strikingly evident in every pavilion. By the time we got to an exhibit called “Dirty South,” museum fatigue had set in and my feet were rebelling. I walked right through, but not without a laugh at Lenka Clayton’s “63 Objects Taken out of my Son’s Mouth.” I limped over to the wall text to read the list and every single object is written both in English and Spanish.

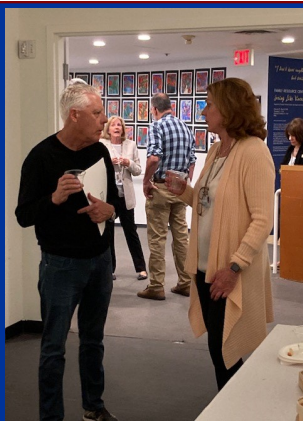
At the Preacher’s Son restaurant that night, we commented on our great experience and how remarkable it was that here in a faraway corner of Arkansas, each and every wall text was translated into Spanish. Discovering that in Dallas was no surprise. But Arkansas? Some of us wondered why there weren’t bilingual wall texts at our SBMA where surely many of our visitors would appreciate them. ■



Lenka Clayton, (British American, b. 1977), *63 Objects Taken Out of My Son’s Mouth*, 2011-2012, acorn, bolt, bubblegum, buttons, carbon paper, chalk, Christmas decoration, cigarette butt, coins, cotton reel, holly leaf, little wooden man, sharp metal pieces, metro ticket, nuts, plastic “O” polystyrene, rat poison, seeds, slide, small rocks, specimen vial, sponge animal, sticks, tea-bag, wire caps, and wooden block.

Docent Recruitment Event

Photos by Patty Santiago



From Left: Shirley Waxman, Denise Klassen, David Reichert, Kathryn Padgett

The Last Page



Our blockbuster show brought a blockbuster boost, not only to the Docent Council, but to the whole town it seems—from sunflowers on State Street to exhibition stickers on take-out coffee, a cocktail named after Vincent at the El Encanto, a Van Gogh-inspired symphony performance—the whole city jumping on board to celebrate an event that ignited a cultural flame throughout the community. Gone are the vestiges of pandemic-induced malaise, the hesitant feel of uncertainty. What a reward for two years of tenacity as we went from no touring to regular touring to supersized touring!

How serendipitous that our show was about an artist whose life was an exercise in tenacity. That day in February 1888, when Vincent stepped off the train in Arles in search of clear skies, vibrant color, and sunshine, it was snowing. As he waited for the thaw, instead of painting his beloved wheat fields, he discovered an orchard of apricots that bloomed in winter. The hiccup barely registered. Through all his challenges, both artistic and personal, Vincent's commitment to art never wavered.

As we plan a future of new hopeful Docents, and celebrate the past in milestones of service, I am reminded that each one of us is honoring a commitment — to ourselves, to the Council. Year in and year out. Ricki's thirty Directories stand as tangible evidence of unwavering allegiance to art, to the Docent role we each embody as ambassador for the Museum.

Whether or not you were on the *Van Gogh* touring team, you were part of the exhibition, bringing friends and family, filling in on other tours, spreading the word. The exhibition brought us together. No doubt there will be more disasters. There will always be health issues. But our Council is a singular body made strong by each one of us. Together we have endured a global calamity that could not be avoided. But look at us now, basking in the sheer joy of shared success, a renewed sense of pride as part of a Museum that brought 65,000+ visitors through our doors.

How great is it that ours were the smiling faces they saw — full of enthusiasm, ready to guide them through the galleries, thrilled to partake in their excitement and radiate our own.

What a way to end the year!

I thank every one of you who submitted to La Muse this Year. Look for your next issue on September 30th. Lori Loriwindsormohr@gmail.com

